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Stephen L. Lemons, Ed. D., is the new director of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Salem, Va., Medical Center, the department is announcing.

"Dr. Lemons has had a distinguished career with VA," said Hershel Gober, Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs. "He brings considerable management skills and expertise to his new position. I am confident he will do a fine job."

Operating on an annual budget of \$100 million, the 310-bed facility has 1,400 employees. The medical center logged 195,000 outpatient visits last year.

Before being selected as director in Salem, Lemons was VA's Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits, a position he has held since April 1996. In Nov. 1996, Lemons was designated VA's acting Under Secretary for Benefits. Joseph Thompson was confirmed in that position by the Senate on Nov. 5, 1997.

Lemons began his VA career as a counseling psychologist in the Columbia, S.C. regional office in 1975. He was appointed director of the department's vocational rehabilitation and counseling service in Washington, D.C., and later served as director of the Waco, Texas regional office, and the Veterans Benefits Administration's central area office.

The recipient of numerous awards, including the Presidential Meritorious Rank Award and Vice President Gore's National Performance Review Hammer Award, Lemons earned a bachelors degree from Pfeiffer College, Misenheimer, N.C.; a master's degree from East Carolina University; and a doctorate in counseling from Indiana University, Bloomington. He and his wife, Janet, have two sons: Jason and Jeffrey.